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THE
Precedency and Pre-eminency
OF ~~God~~ 77
CHRIST
AS
GOD-MAN,

In all the Purposes, or Ways and Works of God,
ASSERTED;

And plainly proved from express Scripture,
and Arguments deduced thence by evident
Consequence.

Wherein is consider'd,

That all Created Beings are by and for him as
GOD-MAN, and are all subjected to Him, as
their Lord and Sovereign: As also the Pre-
destination of Elect Angels to be Companions
with him in Glory; and the Peculiarity of the
Relation between CHRIST and Elect Man,
whose Nature, in an especial Manner, he as-
sum'd: And the Glory, Blessings, Privileges
and Felicity which they were predestinated un-
to, upon the Foot of their Relation to him.

WITH

A brief View of the Fall of Angels and Men, as result-
ing from the Will of GOD, as well as from the Mu-
tability of the Creature, in a Subserviency to the Ma-
nifestation of Divine Glory.

By T. G. L

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THE
Precedency and Pre-eminency
OF
CHRIST
AS
GOD-MAN, &c.

PROPOSITION I.



IS the sole and peculiar Glory of the infinite eternal God; that, as absolutely considered, he is no Image-being, but the original self-existing, self-sufficing, all-comprehending Glory and Felicity.

There are several Images of God, but no Image to him ; several Draughts of his glorious Perfections, but no Copies of the

Glory which shines from Eternity in him. The Wisdom, Power, Love of the infinite God is no Derivation, Transcript, Emanation, or secondary Glory ; but is its own Fountain, Foundation, Subsistence, Duration ; and neither hath Image before it to which it should be conformed, nor Image after it perfectly conformable to it. His Eternity excludes all Thoughts of any Precedency of Glory to his, and his Infinity excludes the Possibility of Equality to him.

PROPOSITION II.

Though God, as an eternal Being, could have no preceding Image of his Glory, yet 'tis part of his Glory, as an infinite eternal Mind and Spirit, to have an infinite eternal Image of himself within his own Being, every way answerable and equal in Glory unto himself ; which Image is begotten of himself, and is his own Son, in whom he eternally beholds his own Perfections, Excellencies, and views his own Person.

Our finite Minds or Spirits contemplate themselves in an internal Image, which is begotten in a spiritual manner by them, and is intimously one with them ; but this Image being finite, fading, transient and variable, is no ways a Measure of the Nature
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and Glory of the eternal Image God hath of himself, within himself ; but can only serve as a dark Shadow, Similitude, or Resemblance, to illustrate what is infinitely mysterious to us. But that he hath such an essential Image of his own Person, is what Reason cannot justly oppose, and Revelation obliges us to believe. And this Image is his eternal Word, of which we read so glorious a Character, *John* i. 1, 2. wherein we see this Word is a divine Person, who is God, is with God as the inseparable Image of his eternal Mind, and equal with God ; how else could he be God ? Thus is he called his Son, *the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and express Image of his Person*, *Heb.* i. 3. where the Apostle describes, not the Gospel, or the Doctrine of *Christ*, or *Christ* as Man only ; but sets forth what he is in Himself, and was from all Eternity. This is that Image wherein the Infinite God has and enjoys the eternal Pleasure, Delight and Solace of all that manifold, immense, invariable, vital Beauty and Glory, which is his Being and Blessedness. This is that Image which, being so equal to him, essential with him, is infinitely complacential and sufficient to satisfy, without all created Images whatever. This glorious Image is no more distinct from his Being, than the Thought from the Mind whilst

whilst thinking it, than the Beams from the Sun whilst shining forth; nor so remote nor separable neither; but is God himself, essentially communicating himself within himself in the manner of an infinite Spirit; which surpasses the Measures a finite Mind is capable of making of it, or comprehending when made out in Words unto it.

PROPOSITION III.

As God hath this infinite, eternal, inseparable Image of himself in his Son, so, as an almighty and all-wise Mind, he can raise up in himself the Images of all Things his glorious Perfections can give Being to, and display themselves in; and can ordain which of those Images he wills to an actual Being and Existence.

Through the almighty Glory of his Perfections he is able to display his own Glory, and make it shine without himself by a creating Will and Power. As there are infinite Possibilities to him, he can frame the Images of all these possible Beings, and contemplate them in himself; and contemplating them in himself, according to the infinite Liberty of his Will, he can ordain any such Image, set up in his Mind, to have actual Existence and Being, as a Shadow of his Glory, and a Display of his Per-

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Perfection; for he calleth the Things that are not as though they were. And this is the difference between all created Images and his Son, who is his eternal Image: Those, antecedently to his Will and Power, humanly considered, were but possible; but his essential Image of himself is a Being as necessary as himself, and he could no more be without it than without the Sight of his own Glory, which he doth behold in this eternal intimate Image of his own Person. This Image then is necessary, and all else are voluntary; yet since God, in all his Perfections, is from Eternity without Change, 'tis consonant to his Glory to conceive, that as he eternally knew what Images he could set up, so he eternally willed what should be called into Being.

PROPOSITION IV.

Though it was thus possible to the infinite God, to frame within himself what Images of his Glory he pleased, and having framed them in himself, to call them into Being; yet he being infinitely happy in himself, and infinitely delighted in his own eternal, essential Image, could have no Motive to give Being to any Image whatsoever without himself, but that Pleasure and Delight he hath in his own Glory, as beheld in that eternal Image

Image of himself, in his Son, or which Image is his Son.

He wanted no Perfection, having all in himself; he wanted no Pleasure, viewing all in his Son; he needed no other Image, he needed no other Glory. 'Twas sovereign Pleasure then which only moved the Lord to design or ordain any Creature-Images, *Rev. iv. 11. For thy Pleasure they are and were created.* Yet was it not meer sovereign Pleasure, but a sweet delightful Pleasure, raised by the Delight of God, in beholding himself in his Son as his Image; so infinitely was the Lord pleased and solaced with the Sight of his Glory, as eternally before him in his essential Image, that this Sweetness moved him to design another kind of Image-Glory without himself, which, though infinitely less bright than the Image of his Son, yet being a Resemblance, a Display, a Ray of his Glory, might be grateful to behold. Thus we may, to speak in a human manner, consider this Matter, as if God had said: *Here is my Image within my self, and in Oneness with me; here I have such Satisfaction, Delight and Pleasure; Will it not be some Pleasure if I put forth my Power, and frame some created Images, in which my Glory that shines in my Son, may shine in another Manner? Will it not be a Delight to behold*

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my self in the Works of my Hands, and to view my Wisdom, Power and Goodness in the Effects they can produce? Not that I mean to say, there were such Reasonings in God, but that, in our Way of reasoning, this Consideration may be look'd on as the Foundation or Motive to God, to create and give Being to Images of his Glory without himself. It was not then the Want of Satisfaction and Solace in his Son, as his eternal Image, which moved God to set up created Images of himself, but the Fulness and the Abundance of that Satisfaction and Delight he had ; 'twas not Necessity but Pleasure. And this highly sets out the Glory of the Son of God, that we are not only saved on his Account, but have our Image-being, and all Things else have theirs also, upon the Account of the Pleasure of God in him his eternal Image : So that all Things are *for him*, as the moving Reason, as well as the *final End*, jointly with the Father.

PROPOSITION V.

As we may justly and reasonably conceive, that the Lord's Delight in his own essential Glory, as beheld in his essential eternal Image, was the main Motive of God's designing the Being of any created Images ; so we must

necessarily believe and acknowledge, that his Son was his Image as designing, purposing the Existence of those external Images of himself, so that he beheld the Images of all designed Beings and shadowy Existences in the All-comprehending Image of his Son.

He could not be the perfect Image of God, if he were not his Image as to his Purposes and Designs, as well as with respect to his essential Glory. God existing eternally, beholds his own eternal Glory in his eternal inseparable Image. God purposing from Eternity, beholds all his Purposes as immediately existing in his Son. He beholds his own Glory in him, as real, actual, infinite, united; he beholds his own Purposes in him, as wise, good, holy, unchangeable, harmonious. He beholds the Images in which this Glory is to shine forth, as in an intire, perfect, uniform, universal, unalterable Platform and Exemplar. The Purposes of God, though free and voluntary, yet being eternal, are not as Accidents in him, nor like the vanishing Thoughts of Men. Hence 'tis common to say, *All that is in God, is God*; to shew how nearly his Purposes, as well as Perfections, are reciprocated with his Essence. And the Reason is, because it cannot be supposed or thought, he could exist as a Being of infinite Knowledge, and not know all that was possi-

possible; or of Wisdom, and not actually determine what of those possible Things should be in their times. Hence, though upon the account of his infinite Liberty he might will the Existence, or Non-existence of this or that possible Idea or Image; of this or that Thing, of what nature soever; yet because of his infinite Knowledge, Wisdom and Power, he cannot be conceived to have been ever undetermin'd, as to what should or should not be; for he had as much Foresight, as much Wisdom, as much Ability, from all Eternity as he hath now, or possibly could have. And therefore, tho' his Purposes are some way distinguishable from his Essence, in our Account and Manner of Reason, they are absolutely inseparable from it in Consideration of his own Perfection. Therefore the Son of God being the Image of his Person, the perfect Image of him in all his Glory, cannot but be his Image in this respect. This is a Truth which some of the antient Philosophers, especially the *Platonists*, have div'd into, and discours'd learnedly of. For these considering God as an infinitely wise and perfect Architect, saw that the Glory of his Knowledge and Wisdom requir'd, that he should be look'd on as a God, who had the Ideas of all things possible before him from Eternity, and the Platform of all

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things future; so that every thing that is or shall be, was comprised in that Platform he had of all. And knowing it unworthy of an infinite Mind to say that this Platform was gradually made, or ever wanting in the least of its full Perfection, or that these Ideas should be consider'd as distinct and particular things in him, they therefore consider'd all the Objects of divine Contemplation or Designation, as comprehended in one *Idea*; which Idea they knew could not be so different from God himself but it must be intimously one with him, and therefore styl'd it his *Word*, his *Image*, as the Scripture doth. And thence also some proceeded so far as to speak of a Trinity. But however they might mistake, in this they were right, that the Eternal God had an Eternal Image of himself in all his Glory and Will to glorify himself; which Image was essentially one with himself, and is no other than his Son, tho' his Son be more than they apprehended, or we are able to comprehend. And if his Love to us passeth Knowledge, as the Apostle says, *Eph. iii.* how much more his Lustre and Glory in himself? Some who explain this Mystery, make use of this Similitude: The Mind of Man in thinking frames both an Image of itself, and what it will do; whilst this Thought is actual,

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'tis the Soul itself thinking and forming an internal Image: But the Mind being finite, cannot think all things at once, nor doth its Thoughts abide unalterably in it; which if they did, there would be an abiding internal Image begotten in the Mind: But God being an infinite Mind, comprehending himself, and all things possible or future, in one eternal, immutable, abiding Thought or Idea of himself, that eternal, internal, unalterable Image of himself is more one with himself than our Thought with our Mind, and yet distinct from himself, not only in our Consideration but in reality. But since all his Glory, and possible or future Displays of it, are thus comprehended in an essential Image, begotten in his eternal Mind, equal to himself, it will necessarily follow, that all Things whatever are comprehended in *Christ* as the perfect Image of God in all respects. But it is to be fear'd lest such a notional Character of the Son of God should fall short of his Glory, though it ascribes nothing to him but what is in reality. Yet we must own him the Image of God in respect to all designed Images of his Glory, as well as with respect to his Glory in it self. Hence *Christ*, as the Son of God, is the eternal Exemplar in some respects with respect unto all the Creation, so far as God is displayed

ed in them. There is no Glory, no Excellency God can display, which is not in *Christ* as his Image; insomuch that it cannot be said any Creature is the Image of God in that which his Son is not. There can be no Purpose, no Counsel, no Work, but was comprehended in the infinite Image of God in *Christ*. Hence God did from Eternity behold things that are or shall be, at once, in the harmonious, glorious, perfect, delightful Description, Delineation of them, within himself in his own Son. Wherefore as certainly as all things are according to the eternal Knowledge of God, they are according to the essential Image of it in *Christ*.

PROPOSITION VI.

The Lord being thus consider'd as designing to display his Glory, and to delight himself in external created Images, 'tis most consonant to the Dictates of Reason and Scripture to conceive and think he would and did design the greatest Display of his Glory, and the greatest Pleasure he might make or have in that Way.

Thus we are told, *Deut. xxxii. The Way of the Lord is perfect.* Though that may be spoken of his Ways of Providence, 'tis true of all his Ways. There is nothing imper-

imperfect, nor no Way wherein he does not issue Things in the highest, God-becoming Perfection. Therefore designing to set up some new secondary Images of himself, 'tis meet for us to think he did will and design the brightest and highest Image of that Nature, that was possible to his glorious Power and Wisdom. Can we think he would limit himself in glorifying himself and pleasing himself to the uttermost? Since 'twas only his Pleasure he design'd, can we think he aim'd at less than the highest Pleasure he could have in that Way he resolved upon? When all possible Ways of manifesting his Glory, all possible Images that might represent it, or in which it might shine, came up before him, should we think he would use his infinite Liberty to chuse out any such Way, any such Images as were not the highest and fittest to answer his Design of displaying his Glory, and affording him the Pleasure for which only he purposed them? Hence it will necessarily follow, that whatever Being and Way it is whereby God arrives to the highest Display of his Glory, and the highest Pleasure and Content, That is to be considered as having the Precedency in all the Designs of God, in setting up any created Images of himself. And this we shall find to be God manifest in the Flesh, in whom

whom God hath undeniably the highest Glory and highest Pleasure and Solace of all Being, and of all his Methods towards Beings whatsoever. Of which hereafter.

PROPOSITION VII.

There is not, nor could there ever be, any created Image or Images, which, absolutely considered in themselves, could answer the Design of God, to have the highest Glory, Pleasure, and Delight, which he might have in this Way and Manner of representing himself in more external Resemblances of him.

It cannot be said of any Creature, or of all meer Creatures, that they are the highest Object God can have for his Pleasure, or that his making them is the highest Way wherein he could glorify himself. 'Tis evident, *de facto*, and confessedly, that in his incarnate Image there is much more of Glory than in all these Images put together. There is a great Display of Glory, but not the greatest; there is some Pleasure in them as the Work of his Hands, but not the highest. Yea, if we consider all created Images in themselves, we shall see how little is in them to answer the Perfection of God's Design, as to his own Praise and Pleasure. Take a Creature as a Creature, simply in it self, and what is it be-

before God? How infinite is the Distance between that and God? And therefore it must infinitely fall short of representing his Glory, and he can have no more Pleasure in it, than there is of his Glory set forth in it; which then must be little, since it is so infinitely short of him and his Glory as in his eternal Image. Every Creature is but a little Remove from nothing in it self, a little different from it; and God therefore can be but little more delighted in it, than he can be delighted in nothing. Take the highest created Image, the most perfect Man, or glorious Angel, and, considering it in itself, 'tis a-kin to nothing. Yea, God pronounces this of all the World, of all Creatures whatever, considered with respect to himself: *Isai. xl. 15, 16, 17. All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him as less than nothing and Vanity:* Wherein he not only declares what they are absolutely, but what he esteems them; *they are counted to him, i. e. in his Eye and View they are no more to him.* And we see the Saints of God have been raised to such God-like Frames, that all in Heaven and Earth was Nothing to them, to what God was, *Psal. lxxiii. 25.* How much more are they then Nothing to God himself, the self-sufficient Being? There is that

Meanness in every Creature before the Majesty of God, that they are not worthy his regarding. *David* cries, *Psal. viii.* *When I consider the Moon and Stars which thou hast made, Lord, what is Man that thou art mindful of him?* And what then, I pray, are the Moon and Stars to God considered in himself? Yea, *Psal. cxiii.* 4, 5, 6. you see God is so high above all Beings, that 'tis said, *he humbleth himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth.* Had he only said, he humbles himself to behold what is in Earth, we might have judged he spoke of Things in their corrupted and depraved Estate, but taking in all in Heaven, it plainly speaks, no Creatures, how glorious soever, are such Images of him, have so much to please or delight him, as that he can be said to look upon them without humbling himself as it were. From all this it follows, that all created Images, absolutely considered in themselves, are very insignificant to him, and unsuitable for the Delight of so great a God. Which will lead us to consider, what higher Way there was for God to display his Glory, and set up an Image wherein he might be so highly pleased, and have Pleasure in other created Images.

PROPOSITION VIII.

All possible created Images being so inconsiderable in themselves, the Lord did therefore, for the setting up the most glorious Image of his Glory that could ever be, and for the fullest Display of his Glory, and for raising the highest Praise and Pleasure to him, beyond and before all, design and ordain his own eternal Image to exist in a created Nature, and cloath himself with a created Image, that he might become in a new manner the Image of his Glory, and be a Foundation of Delight and Satisfaction in what other Images of himself he should set up and create.

This Proposition may seem odd to Men who confine the Designs of God in *Christ* only to the Salvation of sinful Man, tho' the Scripture sets out so plainly other Ends of God accomplished in him and by him. But to him that seriously considers Things, I doubt not but this Truth will appear not only rational but scriptural. But to make it evident I shall propose my Thoughts a little distinctly with all the Brevity I can.

I. *Then, We have proved, and I suppose 'twill not be deny'd, that God in creating did design the highest Display of his*

Glory in a new kind of Image of himself, wherein he might have the highest Pleasure to be attained that way. He did not only propose some Display of his Glory, some low Delight, but the most perfect that might result to him from such a Manner and Way of pleasing and glorifying himself.

II. I think it will be unreasonable to deny, that this is to be considered as his first and primary Design, and the first Thing, if we may so speak, in the divine Intention. He did not first design to glorify himself in setting up this or that inferior created Image, and then finding this Way come short of the Heights of his Design, that then he took up a new Counsel to glorify himself in his Son. Such an Imperfection must not be charged on the Methods of God, nor such Measures made of them. That wherein God arrives to his highest Glory, is that which primarily lay before God, and all other Things are subordinate to it. May we not justly say, The Lord would never have set about the least Creation-work, or begun to have set up any Images of himself, if he had not secured to himself such a Height of Glory and Satisfaction as was the most attainable in such *Goings forth*. And if so, we considering in whom it is he hath arrived at this,

this, may safely say and think, that God would never have created any Images of himself, but as such a Glory and Pleasure was secured by his Purposes concerning *Christ*. Now,

III. 'Tis not hard to evidence, that 'tis by the Incarnation of his own eternal Image, that the Lord doth come to have all those Ends most fully accomplished, which he did or could propose to himself in creating any Images without himself, to set forth his Glory. For,

(1.) This eternal Image cloathing himself with a created Nature in an ineffable manner, did become a new kind of Image of God and of his Glory; he being God manifest in the Flesh, did represent the divine Glory in another manner than when merely considered as the Son of God in the Bosom of the Father. He ceased not indeed to be what he was, but he existed in a new manner, such a manner as transcends the Nature of the Existence of all other created Images, and yet different from the manner of his Existence merely as the eternal Image of the Father. How vast a Difference between a mere created Image in it self, and such an one assumed by the Son of God, the eternal Image! And how vast a Difference in the Natures and Properties of that created Image so united to
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the eternal, and the Nature of that eternal Image in it self! So that in ordaining his Son to be cloathed with a created Image, there did exist such a new Image of himself as he did design. And,

(2.) The Son of God becoming the Image of God this Way, was the brightest Image which it was possible for God to set up for his Praise and Pleasure, and fullest Representation of his Glory. He was not only so as God, as he had always been, but as God-man existing in a new Image-manner. Who can dispute so evident a Truth? Who will not grant, that in that Union, wherein the eternal Image of God was cloath'd with a created Image, there was a higher passive Display of the Wisdom, Love, Power, Holiness of God, than in the bare creating all other Images? The giving a Creature a Being, is nothing to the giving it an Inbeing in God, such as that it should be said to be one with him. Could Divine Power do more, than the matching Finite and Infinite? Could Divine Love ascend higher than the raising so mean a Thing, as is a created Nature in it self, to so intamous an Union? Must we not own, that all Displays of divine Glory are short of what is made in the Person of *Christ* as God-man? And as there was such a Glory in the Constitution of his

his Person, infinitely more amazing than a mere Creation of Beings without himself, so was there answerable Glory in his Person as constituted : So he was in himself the most adequate, the most approximating Image of God that could be in a new manner of existing : For all the Perfections of the eternal Image were now the Perfections of a God-man, not only so that his Person might be said to have infinite Wisdom, Holiness, Power, but might be said to be so, and was so in God's Account, who owned that created Nature he assumed as the Nature of his Son, and esteemed his Person as one cloathed with it, to be all he was before, and look'd on that created Nature united to him with such Regard and Esteem, as it is impossible he should have to any other Image whatsoever. Hence God speaks of *Christ*, Zach. xiii. as *the Man that was his Fellow*. He had from Eternity been equal to him as God, but now he was *the Man his Fellow* ; his Person as God-man being such a new Image of himself, as approached such a perfect Likeness to him. 'Twas not indeed from any Thing in that mere created Image his Son was cloathed with, whence this Glory did result, but from the Union of this Image with that eternal Image of himself in his Son. This was such an advancing to that
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Image, which was nothing in it self, that thereby it became in such a State that all Things else are nothing to it. By this Union it had such Perfections, such Prerogatives, such Capacities, as are not only peculiar to it, but impossible to any other created Image. And hence when the Scripture speaks of *Christ* as the *Image of God*, it doth not only speak of him as his eternal Son, but as his incarnate Son; *Col. i. 15. The Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every Creature.* As the last is not spoken of him as the eternal Son of God absolutely considered, no more is the first neither: But he, as existing in our Nature, is a special, unparallel, adorable Image of the invisible Deity. Nor doth the Apostle speak what he is in his Doctrine, as some would fancy, but what he is in his Person: For what relation hath his being the First-born of all Creatures to his Doctrine? And why should the former be explained of it more than the latter? But how glorious an Image he is of God, is what I may hereafter explain. This is evident, that being incarnate he did become the Image of divine Glory in a new Manner, and that he was so to the utmost Possibility of God's having an Image of himself, in a distinct manner from his enjoying his own eternal Image, as in and one with himself. For
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this eternal Image, taking on him such a created Image, was thereby both a new and most perfect Image of him. Now,

(3.) Hence it necessarily follows, that God, whose Design in creating any Images was only his own Pleasure, could not have a higher Pleasure and Content than in such an Image, which was so glorious, as being so intimously united to himself in his Son; for his Pleasure in any Object being as his Glory is in it, represented or manifested by it, all created Beings together having less of his Glory, and representing less of it, could never afford the Solace and Satisfaction he had in this eternal Image incarnate. Hence, *Prov. viii. 30. I was daily his Delight*, i. e. continually in the Ages of Eternity, before his actual Existence in the World. And when he came, the Lord called all to behold him, as the Object of his own Delight; *Isai. xlii. 1. Behold mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth*. And 'twas impossible it should be otherwise, for as he had an infinite Pleasure in him as his eternal Image, so now a new kind of Pleasure, if any Thing may be said new to God, as he became a new Image of him in cloathing himself with a created Image. And hence,

(4.) It is clear and plain enough, that the eternal Image of God thus putting on

a created Image, did secure the Praise and Pleasure of God, as to the whole Work of Creation in general ; for it could not be in vain, it could not be unworthy of God to go forth in Ways of Creation, when his own Son, for his Glory and Pleasure, would take a created Nature into such an Union with him, whereby he might be glorified and delighted beyond all Possibility of failure, and in a Manner which could never be transcended : For whatever Meanness might be in any Creature, considered in it self, it was impossible a created Nature, so united to his eternal Image, should be despicable in his Eyes. Whatever Incapacity might be in any Creature to advance him, and set out his Glory, there could be none in a God-man, he being adequately suited to accomplish whatever Purposes God might take, and represent whatever Glory God enjoyed in himself. Thus was *Christ* the Moral Foundation, if I may so say, of all the Creation, and the Foundation of all the Pleasure God may have in any of his Works ; of which I shall now speak a little in general.

IV. It remains then, that in the fourth Place we consider, Whether the great Design of God for his Praise and Pleasure being to be accomplished in his eternal Image, cloathed with a created Nature ; whether, I say,

I say, we are not to ascribe such a Precedency to the Design of God with respect to him, as to own that his Purpose of exalting himself in him, and having the Pleasure of such an *Image* of himself, was beyond and before all other Designs whatever, considered in the Order of Nature, as we speak, or the Order we can conceive of as most becoming a God. That the Lord did design to glorify himself in his eternal Image incarnate, beyond and above all, none can question or dispute; for as he hath done it, so we may conclude he did design it. Now why Persons setting up *Christ*, and the Glory of God in him, as highest in all God's Designs, should set him lowest in the Order of his Counsels, is what I cannot conceive. Yet this Men do, who give every Creature in Heaven and Earth a Precedency to *Christ* in God's Purposes, and imagine as if the Thoughts of *Christ*, and such a glorious Image, did not come in, till God had thought with himself of making all, and foreseen the Sin of some, which might require his Help. But for my Part, I think all the Glory, Pleasure, Honour of God in the whole Creation, depends so on *Christ*, that he is to be esteem'd worthy of the first Place and Rank in the Lord's Designs, and to be set before all created Images, as the most glorious and

transcending Image. And thus the Scripture doth sufficiently declare it, if well consider'd: For, *Prov. viii. 22, 23. The Lord possessed me of old, in the beginning of his Ways, before his Works of old*; the *Ways* of God before his *Works* were his Purposes and Counsels with respect unto them. In the beginning of these *Ways* God possessed this eternal Wisdom, this eternal Image of his. Which Expression is not only to set out his Existence then, but the Influence the Consideration of him had with respect to the Works of Creation: Which seems plain, if we consider that this eternal Wisdom is here spoken of as one to be incarnate and dwell among Men. However, if God possess'd him, and pleas'd himself with his eternal Wisdom and Image as to be incarnate, in the beginning of all his Purposes; then did not this Purpose come in in a secondary manner, but he had first resolv'd on this Way of glorifying himself in his Son, and then on all things as subordinate to it. Nor do I see what else is the Meaning of these Words, *Col. i. Who is the First-born of every Creature*. It is joined with his being *the Image of the invisible God*. Now all know, as God he comes not to be ranked with Creatures, or to have any Birth like theirs; he is the only begotten Son of God; he is an essential Image, tho'

tho' not properly the Image of the Father's Effence, but of his Person: A Person may have an Image reciprocated with his own Effence. But how is *Christ* then the First-born of every Creature? Is it an empty Title, without a plain Foundation? Will we say it is because he hath a Glory above all Creatures? So hath the Father, whom yet we would not style the First-born of Creatures. Do not the Words plainly speak of him as God-Man, as the eternal Image of God to be incarnate? Is it not as such he is Head of the Church, the First-born from the Dead, *ver. 18*? And methinks the Explication is easy. The Purposes of God (as one observes) are considered as the eternal Womb, whence all Things come, and whence they are born. So some explain the Words, *Psal. cx. of Christ* having a willing People from the *Womb of the Morning*, i.e. the early Promise made at the dawning of Grace, *Gen. iii. 15.* or else from the Morning-eternal-Purposes of God, by which they were given to him. All the Image-beings God ever did, or will set up, lay in this eternal Womb of God's Purposes, and were born as it were when he willed they should exist in their order. Thus *Christ*, as to be in our Nature, lay in the same Womb of divine Decrees and Purposes; but yet, with a Preference to all the rest,

rest, he being the *First-born* of every Creature, not as to actual Existence in the World, but real Existence before God. For he being designed from Eternity to be incarnate, and accepting of it in and with the Father, he did come up before God as his Son, God-Man; and God considered him no less God-Man, than as if actually incarnate: So that when no Creature was, he was *born* in God's Account, as he existed then under that Character before God. And because he was the brightest of all those Images which the eternal God would bring forth, he had in a manner a proper Right to be before them all, especially since he was to be the *Pattern* of the most glorious of them, *Rom. viii. 29.* There are many other Scriptures might be produced to shew that *Christ*, as the incarnate Image of God, is to have the Precedency to all Images the Lord designed to set up. But designing Brevity, I shall only now say, That as the great Ends of God in creating are accomplished above all in *Christ*, so I think it just, and due to *Christ*, to assign him the highest Place and Glory in the Purposes of God. I am not ignorant of the continual Cavil some will make against this, crying out, Should the Son of God have been incarnate, if Man had not sinned and needed a Saviour? To which I say in short,

(1.) He

(1.) He had never appeared in such a State and Condition in this World as he did, had not Man sinned; for he is the Lord from Heaven, whose Glory as God-Man did require it in a manner as his Due, when he first began to exist with a created Image on him in Time.

(2.) I say 'tis also plain Truth, he had not been incarnate, if Man had not sinned, if you will consider all the Counsels of God complexly and in their Connexion; yet I think the Scripture says not this, but that one End, and the most observable and adorable to us in our sinful State, was his coming on this Design: But how comes this to be exclusive of all the other great Designs of God for manifesting his Glory in Christ? How much more is *Christ* than merely a Saviour? How much Advantage redounds to Angels from him, to whom he bears not such a Relation? But in short, *Christ's* great Work as Mediator, was Salvation; but as God-Man, the eternal Image cloath'd with a created Image, he was pitch'd upon as the highest Means possible for God to have Glory and Pleasure in Ways of Creation, or more external Manifestation of himself. And though in some Sense this Incarnation was a Humiliation, yet indeed it was for the Glory of the *eternal Image* of God, that as he was his only De-
light

light as his essential Image, so he should be his highest Delight among all sorts of created Images that he should set up. It was for his Glory that all other Images should be Nothing to him, and have Nothing but what was transcendently in him, and represented by him. 'Twas the Love of God to him as his Son, as his eternal Image, that he would set up no distinct Images from him, which should be absolutely delighted in for themselves; but that the very Being, and Bliss, and Acceptance of any of them, should depend on him, his Beauty, Glory, Power; and be subjected to him, as we shall farther see.

PROPOSITION IX.

The Lord having laid in his Purposes this glorious Foundation for attaining such Praise and Pleasure, by setting up some Images of his Glory, resolved upon the Creation of all kind of Image-beings, in such Plenty, Variety and Harmony, as his Wisdom thought best and fittest.

As from his Pleasure in his Son, as his essential eternal Image, he was pleased to have Thoughts of setting up more external Images, so from his Pleasure in his Son undertaking to cloath himself with a created Image, he was pleased to set forth himself, and

and shew forth his Glory, in designing and calling into Being all Varieties of lesser and lower Images of himself and Glory. Hence this vast Image-World, in all its Orbs, Spheres, with all the Beauties, Glories, Harmonies of it. Hence the Heavens and their Host, the Earth and its Fulness; all which, though making up a glorious Image, are yet, as has been proved, less than nothing before him, and would have yielded little Contentment without the Advancement of a created Image by Union with his eternal Image, which is the Perfection of all the Ways of God. The whole World, as it lies before God, is but one stately Image, composed of Variety of Beauties and Beings, fram'd with unsearchable Order, united with unexplicable Connexions, principled with different Properties and Natures, animated with Variety of Lives, accomplishing manifold subordinate Ends, and harmoniously conspiring to the grand End of setting forth the Wisdom and Power of the Maker. 'Tis but one stately Fabrick, with a Variety of Rooms, and multiform Furniture. All Creatures, I say, come up before God as one Creature in a Manner, in which he hath diversly manifested his glorious Perfections. All Images but as one Image of himself, eternally one with a Creature-transcending Trinity. We be-

hold but one and another Part of this Image, we see but the Surface of them. We see not, we know not the Subordination and Connexion which renders them, jointly considered, such a Glass to behold the Glory of God in. But the great Architect views his whole Work at once, and all his Designs in them, and what shall be wrought out by them : And thus viewing all, he hath such a Delight as so great a God can have in that so infinitely below him and his eternal Image ; yet some Delight he had and hath in them as the Works of his Hands and Displays of his Glory ; for he beheld all, and all was good, *Gen. i. i. e.* beautiful, grateful, and suitable to the Ends of such Image-beings. 'Tis needless to my present Scope, to give an Account of the Variety of Image-beings God hath set up, to shew forth his Glory, and what the Glory is that shines distinctly in them. But this we are to consider, That there are, and may be many more Image-beings for Kind and Quality, Beauty and Glory, than we know of. 'Tis but with a few of the Resemblances and Pictures of Divine Glory that we converse. We know not what is the Furniture of the heavenly Orbs, besides Light ; nor the Treasure of the Bowels of the Earth and Belly of the Sea. There are many more lively Engravings of divine
 Glory,

Glory, than we see or can read. We are also to consider, That every Image-being doth represent and set forth more of divine Glory and Perfection, than we in our present State do discern. The internal Constitutions of Things have greater Illustrations of Wisdom and Power, than their outward Appearance. Though Man be to the very Eye a comely Image in his external Form, yet how much more of the Wonders of the divine Creator shine within him, than outward Sense or superficial Reason can comprehend? The Display of divine Wisdom and Glory in Things, is more in their relative Station, their harmonious Subordination, their concurring Operation, than what may seem to be in them, in their particular or separate Consideration. And though the use there is of Creatures, the Ends accomplished by them, be sufficient Reason for us to adore the essentiating Power that made them; yet did we know what farther Uses might be made of them, what Effects they might be applied to, and what God accomplishes by them, our Minds would be rapturously affected with Things which we now despise and make nothing of. But if we consider this *Great Image* in general, there is a general Shine of Glory, and the particular Images in it are suited in particular Ways to affect us with it.

The general Harmony of all the Images together shew his Love ; the general Subserviency, his Wisdom ; the general Activity, his Power ; the general Stability, his immutable Glory ; the general Mystery, the incomprehensible Heights of his Excellency, &c. And thus all Images, in particular, have something wherein they are designed for a special Illustration of eternal Perfection, and in a special Way. Some Images discover one Branch of his Glory, some another ; some are as Glasses, some as Pictures, some as more lively Resemblances ; some set out his natural, some his moral Perfections ; some his Nature more intirely, some more remotely and partially. Some Images only represent him to others, as all irrational ; some not only shew forth his Glory, but receive and view the Shines of it, as rational Beings might and ought to do. *Oh, how wonderful and manifold are thy Works ? in Wisdom hast thou made them all,* Ps. civ. 24. But the Book of Creation is become as a sealed Book, wherein we can read very little of the Glory printed with lively Characters in it. The Creatures are Hieroglyphicks, which few have Skill to understand ; and only the God of Nature can raise us the Image of the Nature of those Images, and shew us what he hath designed in the internal Constitution

stitution of them. I'll add but one Thing of this great Image, made up of so many various and particular emblematical Creatures; which is, That as the whole is an Image with respect to God, wherein he sets forth his Glory, and views it in a secondary manner; so the Parts of it are mutual Images and Shadows with respect to each other. Thus less perfect Things are Shadows to those more perfect, and gradually represent what is in them: As there is a Shadow of sensible Things in insensible, in their Motion, Growth, and several Properties; and sensible Beings, as Birds, Beasts, are as Shadows of the Excellencies of rational Man, in their Actings, Instincts, Orders; and thus earthly Things are as Images to heavenly, and bear the Signatures of them in their Motions, Natures, Qualities, and the like. Thus all the Great World is as an Image to Man the Lesser World, or he to that in whom all the Qualities in Nature, all the Orders of Nature, all the Acts of Nature, have some Epitome and similitudinary Abbreviation. Yet when we have said all, still every Being is but an Image and Shadow, and all infinitely short of the Image of divine Glory in the Person of the Son of God, his eternal Image incarnate. But divine Love being pleased with that eternal Image to be incarnate, pleased itself in

in calling into Being such innumerable little Images, composing together a Fabrick, a Statue, a Monument, which might stand to his Praise, and be some Way an Object of Pleasure and Delight.

PROPOSITION X.

Out of all this Variety of created Images it pleased the Lord to single forth the Nature of Man, as the most comprehensive Image, to be united to his Son, his own eternal Image.

This was the created Image which in particular he chose to himself, and wherein the Lord had the highest Glory and satisfying Complacency. The Nature of Man is but an Image-being, any more than the rest, though more glorious than many, and more comprehensive than any else we know of. 'Twas meet for the Son of God, for the raising up a Glory and Pleasure to the Eternal Father, in respect to all created Images, to take such an Image as might most comprehend all the Perfections, Properties, Excellencies, wherein any other created Beings were Images or Resemblances of the Glory of God. And 'tis well known how God hath given Man such a Nature, wherein all Natures are some way comprized; the Nature of Things below him in his Body, which was the Perfection of
Bodies

Bodies in its primitive State; and of Things above him in his Soul, which wanted no Perfection meet unto it. All Lives were summ'd up in him, both that which is called vegetative, sensitive, and spiritual or rational. Thus the Nature of Man did in a manner comprehend the Nature of all created Images; and that not only in general, but in the most excellent Beauties and Properties of them: For whatever Excellency is in any Bodies arising from Temperament of Matter, the principal Qualities observed in Bodies, the orderly Disposal of Parts, and the like, it cannot be denied that the Body of Man, at least in its Original, out-shined the brightest Beauties of the World in all these respects. And by what we see in the Reliques of that Excellency, we may judge something of it, and have Reason to think it was much more glorious. I'll give you but an Instance to illustrate it: The Eye of Man is now the only Seat and Receptacle of Light, but some have thought the whole Body of Man was at first capable of the Impressions of it, and of receiving Images: And Sir *Kenelm Digby*, in his Book of Bodies, gives an Account of one who was absolutely and wholly blind, and his Eyes perished so far, that he had no use of them; yet through a strange internal Light, not particularly fixt in the Eye, he

he was able to discern any Object or Motion in the Room where he was. And if the Body of Man was perfused, irradiated with such a Light all over, how much other Appearance would Objects have than now? And if we allow but such an Exquisite-ness in all Senses, as some have in this or that Sense now, as the Person that could feel Colours and distinguish them, how glorious a Body must this have been! But says the Apostle, *Rom. viii. The Body is dead because of Sin.* 'Tis not only *shall dye*, but *is dead* in a manner already, compar'd with the vital Body *Adam* had. In short, the whole Course of Nature is imitated in Man; and all the Glory that shines in material Images, comprised in his Nature. And whereas the Excellencies of Spirits, wherein they are Images of God, are Immateriality, and some way Illocality, so as in Distinction from Bodies, and Faculties of Reasoning, Willing, Loving, Purity, Holiness, &c. none of these were wanting in Man when his Image-Nature was first set up in its Splendor. And though I dare not say this might be the Reason why the Son of God did cloath himself with our Image, and not the Image of Angels; yet it doth not appear that their Image-Nature was so comprehensive, tho' exceeding Man's in the Degrees of some Perfections: And therefore we
may

may humbly and modestly think, that God designing to himself a Glory and Pleasure as to all the Images he did create, in the Incarnation of his eternal Image, that on that Account partly he did look on the Nature of Man, and singled out That to be the Image wherewith his eternal Image might cloath himself. For his Son existing in this Image, his Appearance therein had an universal Aspect on all those Images and Natures which were comprehended in the Nature of Man. And since it was not becoming to assume every particular Form upon him, what could be more agreeable to divine Wisdom than the assuming that wherein all were summarily comprehended. And this seems to have some fair Appearance of Truth to me, unless we will invert the Order of these Considerations, and state the Matter thus: That God's first Design was the glorifying himself in his Son incarnate, or taking a created Image on him; That taking a created Image he might the more glorify him, he summ'd up all Images in an human Nature, which his Son was to take, and primarily should be consider'd as his; That Man was then to be framed after this Image appropriated for the Son of God to appear in; And that for the farther Display of his Delight in his Son incarnate, in this comprehensive Image, the

Lord drew out the particular Perfections of it in Variety of lesser Images, some having those Perfections more brightly, some more darkly. But I shall not make this my Assertion; all I affirm is this, That it was a suitable Means for the raising up to God Praise and Pleasure, as to all created Images, that his Son did assume such a Nature wherein all the Natures, Excellencies and Properties in the Creation were contained, and in some manner summ'd up; and this I think none can deny. For tho' now it was particularly the Nature of Man, and not of Angels, or the like, he assum'd; yet their Nature was included in that he took, and all Image-Glory shining in it; and his Glory therefore, as the eternal Image cloathed with it, shining some way on all, that God might have Pleasure in all his Images, as irradiated with the Lustre of this, unless they became transform'd into an Image he could not love and delight in, as the Devils and apostate Sinners are.

PROPOSITION XL

The Nature of Man being singled out as that Image the Son of God and his eternal Image should be cloathed withal and appear in, the Lord design'd in a special Manner to shew forth all his Glory, and to glorify his Son,

Son, as taking such a created Image to him, in and towards those whom he ordain'd to exist in that Nature; i. e. plainly, The Son of God being design'd to become Man, the Lord will'd in a special Manner to shew forth his Glory in and towards the Sons of Men, and to shew his Love to them and to his Son, both as his eternal and incarnate Image, and rendering them happy and glorious in and through him.

The former Considerations lead us clearly enough to this; for as although there were other Image-beings whose Nature he might have taken on him, and yet he chose the Nature of Man before all; so tho' his taking a created Nature hath some Aspect to the whole Creation; yet there's a peculiar Relation unto Man, whose Nature in a special Manner it was he took. His Choice of that Nature above all, was to display his Glory in it in a peculiar Manner. There was a special Reason for God to shew forth his Glory with respect to the Nature of Man, when he had ordain'd his Son to cloath himself with it, and take it into Union with him. Tho' it might not be so excellent a Nature in all respects with the Angelical, tho' it had no Worthiness in itself; yet there was a divine Meetness and Becomingness, that this having the Glory of being assumed by the Son of God, that God should espe-

cially glorify himself towards those he design'd to exist as Partakers of it. He could not so directly look on any other Nature as the Nature of his Son; he could not say of other Image-beings, This is that Image my eternal Image hath, or will assume unto him. What Nature so suitable to be the Subject of God's displaying his Glory, as the Nature wherein his Son engaged to glorify him to the utmost? And seeing he ordain'd his Son especially to such a Nature, was it not becoming the Love he bore him in that Nature, to make those Image-beings existing in that Nature, glorious and happy, in him and thro' him? 'Tis true indeed, the Lord doth glorify himself in all his Works, and shews his Glory in an unspeakable Manner in the Angelical Nature; but yet all the Displays of Glory which he makes, are some way or other exceeded in his Dealings with Men, as those Image-beings with whose Image his Son is vested. Hence the divine *Philanthropy*: Hence never so much done for Angels as Men. And is it not agreeable to the Apprehensions we have of God, as one who is so harmonious in all his Ways, that if he made any Images happy in his Son, it should be those whose Image he took upon him? Those have some remote Affinity to him; These have a peculiar Aspect of his Nature upon them.

Yet,

Yet, tho' it was the Will of God especially to shew forth his Glory to those Images, and with respect unto them, and to make them happy in his Son; yet, he was not therefore regardless of other such Image-beings as he purposed to create, but design'd in different Ways to glorify himself and Son in all; so that whatever Happiness any of them were eternally possess'd of, should be on the account of his eternal Image incarnate, without whom no Creature is worthy of his Love and Favour, no not the Angels in Heaven, but as in *Christ* a Foundation is laid for God's Pleasure in them.

PROPOSITION XII.

The Lord thus designing a special Glory and Pleasure to himself and Son among those Image-beings whose Nature his eternal Image should assume unto him, did not only give them, and design them, unto his Son as Lord and Heir, as he did all Image-beings whatever; nor as Companions in Glory with him, some way depending on him, as the elect Angels; but in his Sovereign Pleasure he gave a selected Number of them to him as his Members, to be represented in him from Eternity, united to him in Time, and conform'd to him in that Glory given him as his eternal Image incarnate,

incarnate, as the great Exemplar and Pattern to them.

The Design of this Head is to set out how the Lord may be conceived of in his eternal Purposes, as laying the Foundation of the special Display of his Glory in and towards Man, whose Nature his eternal Image advanced into Union. And the principal Way wherein he did it, I apprehend to be the designing these poor Image-beings unto such an Union with his own essential Image incarnate, whereby they might be delightful to him as in him, and rendered happy and glorious by a Conformity to him. But that this may appear, we have intimated his dealing with other Image-beings, which he did design to create, that so the Peculiarity of his Favour and Kindness unto the Sons of Men might shine more clearly. And whereas I suppose, that all Image-beings whatsoever, were designed to *Christ* as Heir, and subjected to this his eternal Image incarnate, as Lord and Sovereign of them; I think none will deny the Thing, though they may dispute the manner of explaining of it. The Scripture plainly tells us, *Heb. i. 3. God made, i. e. constituted him to be Heir of all Things*; which *Heirship* speaks both his Propriety in, and his Power over all Things. 'Tis as the Son of God, the eternal Image of God in our Nature,
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he speaks of him ; when he was constituted God-man, and designed to be such, he was constituted and designed such an Heir of all Things, and all Things subjected to him as Proprietor and Lord. Now if we consider Matters aright, we shall see the common Notion, whereby *Christ's* Heirship is only made the Fruit of his Mediatorship, is short of what the Scripture seems to set forth to us, and what the Glory of *Christ* is. The Son of God, as incarnate, is the *First-born* of every Creature, which we have shown you to be a Birth in the Purposes of God ; so that the Design of God to glorify himself in him as incarnate, is the Head, the Top, the Foremost of all God's Designs ; and he must have the Honour of being considered on this Account, not only as above, but as before all Creatures whatsoever, not only as God, but as the Son of God designed to be incarnate, and considered as such on this Design. He, as thus the *First-born* of every Creature, was the eternal Delight, the Beloved of the Father, beyond and above all Image-beings which he would or could create ; yea indeed they were as nothing to his own eternal Image incarnate. Being thus infinitely beloved and glorious as his Image to be incarnate, he could not, with a Consistency of Love, or Congruity of
Car-

Carriage to him, as one so glorious beyond all possible Images; I say, he could not but prefer him before, and advance him above all other Images of his Glory, or all other Creatures which he should produce. He could love none as he was loved, or put the Glory on any he put on him. But whereas he was thus infinitely beloved, all other Image-beings were made for him and for his Glory, as one assuming a created Nature to himself; which the Apostle asserts, *Col. i. For him were all Things*. The Design of all Image-beings was the Glory of the eternal Image of God incarnate. God did not produce any Creature for it self, and the Delight which of it self it might afford him; nor did he merely produce it for himself absolutely, but for himself as designing to be glorified in his Son incarnate; nor yet so for himself in him, as to have no regard to the Honour and Glory of his eternal Image, shining forth in a created Image or Nature; but in designing his own Glory in those Image-beings, he designed the Glory of his Son, in and by whom he arrived at the Height of that Glory he designed or proposed to himself, in setting up any more external Images of himself. That therefore his incarnate Image, his First-born, might be glorified with himself in all created Images,
 he

he did constitute him Heir and Lord unto all of them, that in all Things he might have the Pre-eminence above them, yea that his Glory might shine in them. And that his Right and Title might be full, and the highest possible, he had this Royalty given him, That he, as considered in the divine Counsels as God-man, should be jointly the Creator of all those Images, to be produced, with the Father: so that he was not only Creator as merely God, but as considered as God-man in the Purposes and Counsels of the Lord. Whence 'tis, the Apostle speaking of him as such, doth declare, *by him all Things were created, John i. Col. i. 16.* Which is not only so spoken, because that may be predicated of his Person which was done in his either Nature, that so because the Son of God, merely considered as God, did create the World; for he speaks not of him merely as such, but with an imply'd Relation to the human Nature: but because he being the *First-born* of all Creatures in the Lord's Purposes, and considered by God as if actually God-man, he personally existing under an Engagement and Will to be such, the Lord put that Honour on him as such, that he, under that Consideration, should be the Creator with himself of all inferior Images of his Glory. Yea it was his Right,

considered as God-man, to share in the Glory which fundamentally belong'd to the Person of the Son of God, one with the Father : And it is a degrading *Christ* to say, he as God-man is only Creator by way of Predication, and that he was not so by way of divine Estimation, or that he was not considered by God as such. But so far as his existing in our Nature had its Original in the Will of the Father, so the Prerogatives and Glory he had consequentially upon it, as designed or actually accomplished, are ascribed to the Father's Love to him and Will towards him. So the Father is said to make him Heir of all ; God, as his Father, gave all created Beings unto him, as his beloved Son designed to the Nature of Man. For otherwise he is not capable of the Gift of them, but as existing or to exist in our Nature. Hence our Divines say, *Christ* is *Hæres natus*, born Heir of all ; which, I suppose, is not meant of *Christ* merely as God, but of him as God-man, who being the beloved of God, as such, all Things are given by the Father to him as his Inheritance. To be short, let us only state the Matter thus: The eternal God designed the shining forth of his Glory in a created Image ; That he might have the utmost Display of his Glory, and have the highest Pleasure in this
Way,

Way, he ordained his own eternal Image to assume a created Image, which he will'd to do in an eternal Harmony with the Father. His Son hereon is considered by him as his incarnate Image and his First-born. That his Love to his Son, as thus considered, might appear, he designed him a Glory with himself in all those lesser Image-beings he should produce; and that he might be glorified in them and above them, he not only conferred on him the Prerogative to be with himself the Creator of them, but consequentially Heir, Lord and Sovereign End of all those Image-beings; so that he might, by all Kind of Titles, claim Propriety in them, and every Way have Power over them. And thus are all Creatures, all Image-beings, *Christ's*, for him, and under him, who is the infinitely beautiful and glorious Image of God, cloathed with a created Image and Nature, wherein God hath his utmost Exaltation and Satisfaction. Thus then all Mankind were given unto *Christ*, together with all other Image-beings. He is Proprietor, Lord, and Heir of all, and the vilest as well as the most glorious Images are subjected to him.

But besides this Propriety the incarnate Image of God hath in all, besides this general Gift, there were some Beings peculi-

arly given to him of God, or designed unto him, which is all one, to be as Companions with him in Glory, as existing in an *Image-nature*. The Son of God assuming an external Image into Union with him, it was not congruous and becoming he should exist alone, but it was for his Glory to have inferior Images of divine Glory shining with Rays of his Brightness, and happy with him, and in Dependance on him. Wherefore as God designing him to an Union with a created Image, design'd to produce a Variety of Images, so to chuse out of the principal of them such as might be as Companions with him, beholding and admiring his Glory as the *incarnate Image* of God, and ascribing all their Images to him. Yet herein it did not please God to take any intire Nature, whether of Men or Angels, but selected, according to sovereign Pleasure, such as he absolutely designed as such Companions with his glorious Image. He left out some Image-beings, that it might appear what a mere Image-being is in and of itself; but some he absolutely designed to this State of Fellowship with his incarnate Image in Bliss and Glory: And thus did he chuse both Angels and Men. We plainly read of the *Elect Angels*, and that they are elected to him is evident, in that he is their Head; and that
their

their Bliss depends some Way on him is evident also, both from what hath been said of the Meanness and Unworthiness of all Creatures in themselves considered, and the Mutableness which hath been discovered in some of them. Yea the Apostle includes these in his *Family*, *Eph. iii.* and doubtless the Supplies, the Order, the Welfare of all that Family of *Christ* depend upon him. Their Attendance on him shews their Subjection, their beholding him with Admiration, *1 Tim. iii. 16.* speaks Affection, and their Praises of him shew some Advantage by him, *Rev. v.* No Image-being is or ever was accepted but in the beloved Image of God his Son. These then are as glorious Images, glorified through him, that are the Companions of the eternal Image of God in a created Nature in Bliss and Glory. And none can deny, that all the Bliss these have with him and by him, is without any Consideration of a Fall. And that they were elected to him, and are happy in him, not as a Saviour or Mediator, but as the glorious Image of God, whose Beauty alone can render an Object beautiful with God. 'Tis as God-man, as his incarnate Image, they were given unto him to be such Companions. Nor can I see Reason to consider the Matter otherwise, as to any other Images

ges designed for Companions with him in Glory. I cannot see but they are chosen to him under the Consideration of Image-creatures as well as those, and not only under the Consideration of Sinners: But that all these Image-beings coming up before God in his eternal Mind, he did select such a Number to his Son, who should be blessed and happy in him for ever. Thus were the Angels given or designed unto him, and thus were the Sons of Men, so far as I can apprehend. They were immediately and absolutely as Creatures designed to his Glory, without Consideration of the Fall or the Entrance of Sin; and so they were designed in the same Manner to Glory with him. And though there are so many Cavils about this Matter, yet, 'till I can be perswaded that God's glorifying himself in his Son was but a secondary, yea a kind of accidental Design, I shall never, I think, believe otherwise than that as *Christ* was primarily designed to the Glory of God as God-man, as the highest Image of Glory possible, so that those who are happy with him, and Companions with him in Glory, were primarily designed unto him as such, and to Blessedness in him. But yet thus far we see not wherein the Lord doth peculiarly shew forth his Glory, and exalt his Son in respect to those
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whose Nature he did especially assume: And therefore That we shall next consider a little.

We have in general said, That the Speciality of this Glory designed to the Image-beings in that Nature the eternal Image of God assumed, consists in his giving them or designing them to him as his Members, so as to be represented in him from Eternity, united to him actually in Time, and conformed to him in their Measure in the Glory, Privileges, Felicity he hath as the incarnate Image of God, and their great Exemplar. 'Tis hard to make out these Things in few Words: I shall endeavour it as far as I can.

To be Companions in Glory, and Members of glorious *Jesus*, are different Things. There are no Companions indeed with *Christ* in Glory, but have some Union with him; for *Eph. i. 10. Things in Heaven and Earth are gathered together in one Head, which is Christ.* Whatever Union is by Love, by Subjection unto one Head, such an Union is between the angelical Images and the incarnate Image of God. But yet a more peculiar kind of Union did God design and doth accomplish between his Son and those Image-beings whose Nature he assumed: which is evident enough from this alone, that it cannot be said of any other

ther Beings as is of Believers, *Eph. v. 30. We are Members of his Body, Flesh of his Flesh, and Bone of his Bone.* Where, tho' there is an higher Sense than the literal, yet the spiritual Sense is proportionable; and as in the literal Sense it can be said of none else, no more in the spiritual Sense to that Degree.

However inexplicable the *Oneness* of these finite Images with the incarnate Image of God may be, and is, yet it is the most peculiar Instance to set out how much more God hath ordained a Glory to himself and Son, as to Mankind, than as to any other Image-beings whatever. For as the *human* Nature of *Christ* became the highest Image of divine Glory, by its personal Union with the Son of God, so the Persons of these inferior Images shine with the brighter Glory, according to the Nearness of the *Oneness* they are advanced to with him; and if they have a nearer Union, they must have an higher Communion with the eternal, vital, almighty Image of God, who is able to fill them with all the Glory he pleases. And as the very Union made between the eternal Image of God and a created Image, hath more of Glory, Love, Wisdom, than the mere Creation of that Nature; so the very Union of Souls with *Christ* hath brighter Displays of Grace, Favour,

Favour, Power, than the creating of them and mere giving a Being unto them. And as the infinite Pleasure of God in that created Image his Son assumed, is from its Oneness with his eternal Image, and as look'd on as one with him, so according to the Oneness of any Creatures with his incarnate Image, and as they can be look'd on as one with him, such must be the Pleasure, Delight of God in respect unto such Image-beings; for the more they are one with him, the more beloved in him. And the very Pleasure God had in that Union between his eternal Image and a created Image, and the Delight he had in his Person as so incarnate, upon the Account of his intimate Oneness with him, was the great Motive of his taking that Way to have Delight in other created Images, namely, by the ordaining of them to his incarnate Image to be as Members of him. Hence *Christ*, *John xvii. 21.* in his pleading for actual Union, which he was to do as Mediator, proposes this Consideration, as most taking with the Heart of the Father which he knew, *That they may be One, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be One in us.* Wherein he plainly intimates the great Motive of this designed Oneness as the Way of Happiness, to wit, the infinite Solace between the Fa-

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ther and him upon the Account of the glorious Union between them. And though the same Union cannot be intended, yet such an Union is intended, as might raise up the highest Satisfaction and Pleasure in God in beholding these created Images. Nor can it be conceived how the incarnate Image of God could come to have either a greater Glory or Pleasure in any created Images, than by their being united to him. For though they are but a secondary Glory to him, since his Union and Communion with the Deity in his incarnate State is infinitely a brighter Glory and fuller Felicity, yet he could not have an higher Glory with respect to Images without himself, than to have them made his in such a manner that they should be as one with him, and loved and blest in him. All the World of Images were given him as Heir of all; they are his Goods, Possessions; Angels also were given him as Companions, Subjects, yea Servants also: but these were not given him as his Body, which he was so immediately to fill with Life, Virtue, and Influence. This is the Title put upon the Church, *Eph. i. ult. Which is his Body, the Fulness of him that filleth all Things.* Being his Body they are his Fulness as Head, wherein as Head he is compleated, perfected, and glorified: For *they receive*
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of his Fulness Grace for Grace, John i. 16. So they are reckoned his own Fulness as a Head. And hence *Christ* reckons them his Glory, *John xvii. 10. All thine are mine, and I am glorified in them*; not only by them instrumentally, but in them personally. He speaks of them as given him of the Father to be his Members; as such they were given him as his Glory, that his Glory, as the incarnate Image of God, should shine in all these little Images taken into Union with him. And, doubtless, a special Delight and Pleasure must needs result from their Union with him, and his enjoying them as the Members of his Body; for according to Nearness of Relation of Things to us is their Dearness and Delightfulness; so our Children are more dear and delightful than Goods or outward Treasures; and according to Dictate of Nature and Scripture, a Wife, as one Flesh, should be dearest; which the Apostle presseth as the great Foundation of Affection, *Eph. v.* shewing that the Dearness of *Christ's* Love to Believers did result from the Consideration of their Oneness with him. And surely for *Christ*, so glorious an Image of God, to look on these little Images of divine Glory as his own, and united to him, yea and little Copies or Pictures of him, must contribute to his Pleasure in them. Besides

all this, through this Oneness the Dependence of all their Glory and Felicity on him, the Security and Stability of it, is provided for, and most fully manifested. For these and such like blessed Ends, too large to be now rehearsed, we may see how congruous it was, both to the Designs of God for his Praise and Pleasure, and for the honouring and exalting his eternal Image incarnate, to constitute him a Head, to ordain these inferior Images to such an Union with him as indeed he did. But if you ask why then he did not ordain the angelical Images to the same State, I can only say, I know not how nigh an Union they have with *Christ*, but that his Son especially being united to the Nature of these Images, the Lord was pleased to ordain them to a special Oneness with his Son.

It being now evident, as I think, that the Lord, in his very first Purpose of creating these Images, did design, ordain, and give them to his own eternal Image, considered as one to be incarnate, it will hence follow, that he should be look'd on in the *presentiating Purposes* of God, as actually existing as their Head and their Representative. That the Son of God did actually exist with the Father from all Eternity is agreed on by those concerned in these Truths; That the Decree of God, which makes

makes Things possible to be future in the
 Nature of Things, makes them as present,
 as to God, is what none, I suppose, will
 deny ; the Lord then ordaining his Son to
 assume a created Image, his Son willing,
 consenting so to do, he then came to be
 considered by God as if he had actually
 cloathed himself with it. And thus our
 Divines in general assent, that *Christ* from
 before the Foundation of the World having
 engag'd to take on him the Nature of Man,
 and become a Saviour, was actually consi-
 dered by God as doing it, and on that Ac-
 count so many were saved by him whilst he
 did not actually exist in a human Nature as
 to Men. And without doubt, the Decrees
 of God being joined with all the Power,
 Wisdom, &c. required to the fulfilling of
 them, must presentiate Matters decreed un-
 to him : Whence it doth appear, it is not
 strange or absurd to say, that the Son of God
 design'd to human Nature, should be actually
 considered by God as a God-man, or as his
 eternal Image incarnate ; especially consi-
 dering, that he had not only a virtual, decre-
 tal Existence in the Lord's Purposes, but
 that his Person actually was before God,
 and with God, and so capable of all Trans-
 actions with him. Those created Images
 which should be united to him had but
 such an Existence as the Decree of God
 gives

gives to Beings; but tho' they could not so fully be said to be actually his Members, he may be said to have existed as their Head, because he eternally was, and they irrevocably given unto him. Hence he was truly their Head and Representative, as Members given to him; whence he speaks of himself as actually rejoicing and delighting in them, *Prov. viii. 31. My Delights were with the Sons of Men.* Yet he speaks there of what he was and did before any of the Sons of Men were created. Thus those who were given to Christ to be his Members, had not only a common kind of Being with all other created Images, but a representative Being in the eternal Image of God, consider'd before God as their Head, and as one incarnate. Which ought to be considered as a special Illustration of the Love of God to these human Images, and the Riches of his Grace unto them. For thus God view'd them, not only in his Decrees, but look'd on them with everlasting Love, as beheld in this Relation his Counsels had fix'd between them and his incarnate Image, who sustained in a manner their Persons before God from all Eternity. Hence all primary Acts of Grace which respect their Persons from Eternity, are said to be *in him*; which Words are to be explain'd from this representative

sentative Union with him, thro' the immediate Designation of them to him as his Members. All Acts of Love fell on them as thus consider'd as originally belonging unto him. So they were chosen *in him*, *Eph. i. 4.* Inasmuch as all the Glory they were elected to was as Members of him, and related to him. So also were they accepted *in him*; that is, eternally look'd on with Grace and Favour, as view'd in that Oneness with his eternal incarnate Image. For as God loves none in Time but as *in him*, so did he regard none in Eternity but as so consider'd.

But as God ordain'd these created Images to such a blessed Oneness with his incarnate Image, so to a Likeness also which might be answerable to the Intimousness of that Oneness which he design'd them unto: That thus his Son, his glorious Image, was to be the great Exemplar as to all those Images united to him; and they to be as little Copies, Pictures of his Glory and Felicity: That as God beheld with infinite Pleasure his Glory shining in the highest in his own incarnate Image, so his Son might have the Pleasure of beholding himself and his own Glory pictur'd out and shining in these lesser Images in such blessed Oneness with him. To understand this Matter more distinctly, we may consider

der how all the Grace, Glory, Felicity, Souls do arrive at through *Christ*, was given to him for them, was given to them in him, and given to them by him.

Whatever Bliss, Felicity, Glory, any of these created Images, of which we speak, ever come to have, was from Eternity given unto *Christ*, as their Head, for them. God giving their Persons to him, gave their Portion also, viz. the Bliss and Glory they should have. That is, in his Transactions with his own Son as to be incarnate, he not only made their Persons his by designing such a Oneness, but he made over to him by eternal Purpose and Promise such a State of Glory for these Persons as might express the Height of that Love he bore unto them as his Members, and belonging unto him.

Thus, *Titus* i. 2. The Apostle speaks of Hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot lye *promis'd* before the World began. Where we are to observe, that he says not from the Foundation of the World, as sometimes; then it might have been apply'd to the first Promise, *Gen.* iii. 15. but he speaks of a Promise before the World began, i. e. in Eternity. Nor doth he say, which God had *purpos'd* before the World began, but which he *promised*. All Purposes are considered as internal Acts, limited

to one's self; hence we read, *Ephes. i.* of the Purpose God *purposed* in himself. But a *Promise* is a relative Act, and imports an Obligation one lays himself under to another. Now no one is capable of having a Promise made him but as existing, or as one exists to whom the Promise is made for him. Since then we did not exist before the World began, it cannot be properly said it was promised us directly. But the eternal Image of God to be in Time incarnate, existed, and the Promise of eternal Life, and so all Happiness, was made to him for us; he not only existing, but being considered as a Head to those created Images that should enjoy eternal Life in him. And doubtless, I say, if eternal Life was thus promised him for us, then all kind of Blessings with relation to it. Thus he, as Head, had all given him for us.

But the Lord did not only give him thus all the Glory of his Members for them, but it was all given to them in him; which we must explain more largely. Now though the giving these created Images their Glory in him imports the Consideration of their designed Oneness with him, and Relation to him, as the great Motive on the account of which God did absolutely bestow all upon them,

yet this takes not up the full Sense and Import of that Word : But as he gave them their Bliss and Happiness in Consideration of him as their Head, so in Conformity to him as such ; that as he was their Head, so their Exemplar also ; which we may understand, if we consider the Matter distinctly. The eternal Image of God was equal to the Father in Glory and Felicity, as his Son, and his Glory no otherwise given him than his Being, which can no ways properly be said given unto him, Deity implying necessary Existence. But this eternal Image being to cloath himself with a created Image, for the Manifestation of the divine Glory and his Pleasure, 'twas not possible he should be ordain'd to this State, to this incarnate Way of Existence, without a Glory becoming the Son of God, and suited to this new Way of existing to the Father's glorious Delight and Contentment. Nor was it possible but that his Glory should be proportionable to the Affection and infinite Love of God unto him, and answerable to his Design of making the highest Manifestation possible of himself in this glorious incarnate Image. Nor could the Son of God have accepted such a State without the Affignation of such a Glory to him as was becoming his Person
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in such a Condition. Hence as he was ordain'd to appear and exist cloath'd with a created Image, both that created Image which was his human Nature, and his Person, which included both Natures, had such Dignities, Excellencies, Royalties, Prerogatives, granted to it and conferr'd upon it. The Union it self, consider'd as to the human Nature, was the highest Glory of all, as well as the Foundation of all other Glory. Therefore though the human Nature, the created Image consider'd in itself, had no such Title to, or Worthiness of Glory, yet being united to the eternal Image, its Dignity was advanced, and its Right by Union exceeding extensive, as to all kind of Glory. For it was meet that the Glory of the eternal Image should shine forth in this created Image assumed by him to that End. Hence this human Nature was ordain'd to the highest internal Perfections of Holiness, Grace; the highest divine Privileges of Communion with God, divine Communications made to it, divine Relations conferr'd upon it; to the highest external Perfections and Shines of Glory, such as it now is cloath'd with in his exalted State, wherein all the external Glory of the Creation is darkened with the Brightness of his very external Image, il-

lustrated with the Rays of the eternal divine Image dwelling in it and united to it. Besides the Glory which seems especially terminated in the Nature, and respecting of it, there is the Glory of his Person as a God-man, which Glory is the Relation of Sonship, the infinite Affection born to him merely for the sake of his Person, as so infinitely beautiful an Object. Besides this Glory, there's a relative Glory, as to all created Images, his Person having the *Precedency before them* in divine Consideration, being the Creator of them, the End for which they were created, and the Lord over them. This and much more Glory was absolutely ordained to the incarnate Image of God, as his Bliss, Felicity, in that State, and as cloath'd with a created Nature. And although he came into the actual Enjoyment of some of this Glory, through the Work of Mediation, yet great Part of it is merely the Result of Union, absolutely his Right as the eternal Image of God incarnate.

This Glory being ordain'd to the eternal Image of God in his incarnate State, we are now to see how as God ordain'd created Images to an Oneness with him, so to a Likeness to him. And here 'tis evident that no Creature-Image whatsoever

ever is capable of such a Height of Glory
 as the human Nature of *Christ*, so im-
 mediately united to the eternal Image of
 God filling it with all vital Influences.
 'Tis also evident there can be no real
 Glory in any created Image, which should
 not be transcendently in that created
 Image the Son of God himself assum'd
 into Union; so that all Glory that is in
 any Creature can be no more than a Sha-
 dow, a Picture, a lesser Draught of that
 Glory that is in him. 'Tis also evident
 that he being thus the highest Image,
 the first and brightest ever set up, is di-
 rectly the grand Exemplar unto all, so
 far as real Glory shines in them. And 'tis
 no less certain, that 'tis the sovereign
 Pleasure of God alone, that determin'd
 what of this Glory should be pictured
 out, as it were, in one and another cre-
 ated Image. 'Tis also already proved,
 that the Lord was pleas'd to design those
 created Images, existing in that Nature
 his Son assumed, to a peculiar Confor-
 mity to his own incarnate Image. And
 now remains that we consider how and
 in what respects he, as their Head, is
 constituted their grand Pattern and Ex-
 emplar in Glory, so that in God's ordain-
 ing his incarnate Image to such a Glory,
 he did therein ordain a Glory to the in-
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ferior Images designed to him as his Members, who were to shine in the Glory of him their Head. Now that the Lord did in a special Manner thus set up his Son as such an Exemplar, the Apostle fully declares in these Words, *Rom. viii. 29. Whom he did foreknow, he did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren.* Where the Apostle in few Words sums up the Happiness the eternal Objects of divine Love were ordained unto, and that is conformity to the Image of the eternal Son of God, as cloathed with a created Image, for as such he speaks of him. That this might be more evident, he considers *Christ* as the *First-born*, which cannot be merely spoken of him as God, since as such he is the only begotten Son of God; but as he is said to be the First-born of all Creatures; and as we explained that to be, as to God's Purposes, and his Precedency and Pre-eminence above all therein, so are we to explain this also of the Priority due to *Christ*, in our Consideration of him with respect to all the Sons of God. He then being the first-born Son, the primary Image, had such a Glory as we have shew'd, ordain'd unto him. He, as vested with this Glory, was ordain'd

dain'd to be peculiarly a Head to such
 created Images whose Nature he took.
 They, as Members of him, were ordain'd
 to a Glory also. For if God could not
 ordain a created Nature to exist in Union
 with his eternal Image without a suitable
 Glory, no more could he ordain any in-
 ferior Image to an Oneness with his eter-
 nal Image incarnate, without such a Glo-
 ry as was answerable to the Union and
 Oneness. For as he could not but love
 it, and love it highly, considered as uni-
 ted with the infinitely well-pleasing Image
 of his Son, so his Love could do no less
 than confer a Glory upon it answerable to
 his Affection, and to the Relation. These
 inferior secondary Images being then or-
 dained to Glory, not merely as Crea-
 tures considered in themselves, but as de-
 signed unto him, and look'd upon as his
 Members, it was necessary for the Glory
 of his Son, as their Head, that there should
 be a Conformity between his Glory and
 theirs as so belonging to him, that a glori-
 ous Head might have glorious Members,
 and that his Glory might shine forth in
 them; and since it was that Image which
 shined in his Son wherein God was so in-
 finitely pleas'd, that for his Pleasure in
 those lesser Images they should be con-
 form'd to the Image so delightful to him;
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for what other Image could be grateful in his Eye? Now whereas this Conformity in Glory to this Image of his Son was not ordain'd according to what of Worthiness might be imagined in a Creature, but according to the Measures the Love of God to his Son, and his Design to exalt him, might give him in proportioning of this Glory unto those united with him; hence, I say, it could not be any low Conformity could answer his blessed Ends and Designs; but since the Honour and Pleasure of *Christ*, as well as his own, were so concern'd in this Matter, it was becoming the divine Goodness and Wisdom to exemplify so glorious and pleasing a Pattern in the highest manner; yet so that every created Image might see its Distance from, and Shortness of, the supreme Exemplar, and all the Members be adoring the Preheminence of their Head. Hence God ordaining Glory to his incarnate Image, not only as his Son to shine in his single Glory, but as a Head to shine in those Image-beings ordain'd as his Members, did appoint the same Glory to the one and the other, though in different Measures, and with a Reserve of some peculiar Glory to his Son, which none was to share in. Whereas then the first and primary Glory of that created Image
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the Son of God assum'd was its Union with his Person, so were these Creature-Images ordain'd to his Son, ordain'd to a blessed Oneness with him, as the Foundation of all further Glory he should confer upon them, as the Means of all Happiness to them. And so this Union is set forth by *Christ*, *John* xvii. both as his own highest Glory, and the greatest Glory of those who are his. And as that human Nature so united was ordain'd to the Glory of such internal Perfections of Holiness, Grace, representing God in all his moral Perfections; so the same Glory, though in a lower Measure, was ordain'd to all his Members, they being design'd as Images of him herein. And whereas all external Glory was ordain'd to that human Nature so united, so are his Members ordain'd to a Conformity to his glorious Body, *Phil.* iii. 21. so they were appointed to that Glory of Place and State with him, as might be shown at large. And whereas the Person of this incarnate Image was ordain'd to all glorious Privileges and Enjoyments, to Royalties and Preheminences beyond and above all, such a Glory also was at once ordain'd to them; so as he in his Person, in both Natures united, had the Glory of being Son of God, so are they ordain'd in him, and as

his Members, to be Sons and Children of God. As his Person was constituted the End of other inferior Images, so the Apostle tells us, Believers are some way the *special End*, under him, 1 Cor. iii. 21. *All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, &c.* And thus it were easy to multiply Instances to shew how all human Images ordain'd to some Oneness with this blessed Head had a conformable Glory ordain'd to them. Thus *Christ* tells us of Believers being lov'd by the Father as he was lov'd by him, *John* xvii. 23. And the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* i. 9. speaks of Grace given us in *Christ* before the World was, comprehending all the Blessings conferr'd on him as Head and Exemplar. So *Ephes.* i. 3. he hath blest us with all Blessings *in him*. And the Dispensations of God in Time are answerable hereunto, his Work of Grace being but a forming *Christ* in us, *Gal.* iv. and his glorifying of us but a changing into the same Image from Glory to Glory. So that I doubt not but you see the Truth of this, That God ordaining Glory to his Son as his incarnate Image, ordain'd a like Glory to those Images whom he ordain'd to him as Members.

Now to say how all our Glory is given us by *Christ*, as well as ordain'd to us in him, in a word 'tis thus: His Will being

ing infinitely conformable to the Will of the Father, his assuming a created Image being also of his own Will, his Heart as incarnate being so towards the Image-beings given to him, and all their Felicity coming so from him, so he is said to give it to them. This appears, if you consider but two Places, *John xvii. 22. And the Glory thou gavest me, I have given them*; with *John xv. 9. As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you*; That see how the Father loves his incarnate Image, and displays his Affection to him, so doth *Christ* to those inferior Image-beings, which were given to him and taken to a near Union with him.

Now herein it is that God in a special manner glorifies himself, as to that Nature which his Son assum'd. Although the angelic Nature is not left out, nor meanly exalted in him; yet is *Christ* in a more special manner a Head, an Exemplar in his Glory, with respect to Man than them.

PROPOSITION XIII.

Though the Lord, for his own Pleasure and Delight, did thus ordain his Son to become his incarnate Image, and did absolutely design some created Images to be his Companions and Members, in and together with his very Purpose of creating them:

yet that these Image-beings might the more fully see and know for ever the Dependance of all their Felicity on his incarnate Image, and that all the glorious Perfections in God's eternal Being might shine forth in and through his incarnate Son, it pleased God to ordain these Images, in their first created State, to such a mutable Condition; whereby, in a Manner most consistent with all his Glory, there might be such a Fall as might be an Occasion or Means to the Accomplishing these Ends and Designs.

However the Branches of this Head may be cavill'd at by Men, yet the Considerations we have propos'd and establish'd, and the Confirmations we shall add at present, I hope will make the whole of it appear to be Truth.

There is none can doubt or deny that all Creature-images were created in themselves mutable Creatures, and in a changeable State; neither can a Creature, as such, be otherwise. The very Liberty and Indifference Men contend for, involves a Mutability in it, supposes they might embrace Evil as well as Good.

That this Mutability issued in the Fall of both, some of the Angels, and the whole of Mankind, in some respect, is not a Matter contested by any that own the Scriptures. The Fall of the Angels, as changeable Beings,

ings, is beyond Contradiction, from what *Jude* says, *ver. 6.* And the Fall of Man as a mutable Being, hath not only the Scripture Evidence, but manifest Experience, to confirm it; so that being made mutable, both became sinful and miserable.

And doubtless none will say but God could have made them otherwise, and have given them a Liberty not subject to be perverted to Sin. He could have made them free Agents, and yet in a sure Estate. How else are the Spirits of just Men made perfect, establish'd in Bliss and Glory? So that their Mutability resulted from his Will, as well as from their Nature as Creatures.

Nor will any dare to say, that the making of Creatures in a mutable State, leaving a Possibility of Sin, was a Matter inconsistent with the Wisdom, Goodness, and Holiness of God. Will Men impeach his Righteousness and Graciousness for leaving any room for his Creatures to be miserable? Will we say, that it was not like a God to confer such a Liberty on the Will of Angels and Men as might any way expose them to be prevail'd on to rebel against him? Who hath been his Counsellor, and who shall dare to be his Censurer?

If it were consistent with his Glory to make them in a State so mutable, was it not also consistent with it to leave them

to

to be miserable? Was he bound to prevent their Misery? He was then obliged to put them beyond the Condition of Mutability. Though therefore he could not create them directly miserable, he might honourably create them mutable; and tho' Mutability was from their Nature, their Sin and Misery was from their Will and Liberty.

To imagine that the infinite Wisdom was ignorant of the Issue of their mutable State, and the Choice their Free-wills would make, and the Fall ensuing thereon, is plainly to deny him to be omniscient, and to suppose the Creature not only free, but independent on him. And whereas 'tis generally owned, That God before the Foundation of the World did decree to send a Saviour, and the Apostle *Peter* expressly says it, Chap. i. and so many Scriptures declare such Acts of Grace on his Account before the World was, as *Eph. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 3.* 'Tis undeniably sure, the Fall of Man was no accidental Thing to God, was no more than he knew of before; how else was a Saviour decreed and determined before?

And now we may consider, whether any can deny whether the Fall of Angels and Men hath not been a Means and Occasion for accomplishing such Ends and Designs as we have named. Hath not the Nothingness

thingness of mutable Creatures, in themselves, appeared in their sinful Lapse? Hath it not been a Means to display the Dependance of whatever Glory, Stability, Felicity they have, on the incarnate Image of God? Hath not God hereby been making in *Christ* a fuller Manifestation of his Perfections, than was ever in the first Creation of Image-beings? Are there not higher Discoveries of Love, Wisdom, Justice, and new Discoveries of Patience, Mercy, Long-suffering? Are not all Image-beings brought into clear Dependance on *Christ* for all their Acceptance and Felicity?

And what is there now that can be disputed, but whether we may say that the infinitely wise God did not, with an Eye to these Ends, ordain the creating of them in such a mutable State, whereby such a Fall would be as might be a Means for accomplishing of them? May we consider their Fall as foreknown, their Fall as sure, their Fall as subservient to bring in a Saviour, and may we not consider it as a Means looked on by God as meet for the fuller Display of his Glory in his incarnate Image, and the manifesting the Dependance of all his Regard to Creature-Images on him? Can we say the Ends are such as became not God, or the Means such as reflect upon him?

Surely

Surely these Designs are such as may be ascribed to God consistently with his Glory. 'Twas for the Honour of his incarnate Image that all else should be beholden to him for what Favour was shewn them, and what Felicity was conferr'd upon them. 'Twas not unworthy of him to have Images, in whom and to whom his Mercy, Patience, Grace, might shine, as well as Power, Wisdom, and meer Goodness. 'Twas not an unsuitable Thing to *commend* and set off his Love, by displaying it through such dark Shades, and rendering it admirable and adorable through such a Way of exercising of it.

Was the *Means* by which this is accomplish'd, and acknowledg'd by us in general to be so, were these dishonourable to God? This is what Men imagine who measure God by themselves. Could any thing set out the Dependence of all on *Christ* more, than the leaving these created Images to fall, as standing by themselves? Could Mercy, could Patience, could Grace to Hell-deserving Creatures, have appear'd or been manifested, had not such an Occasion been? Could the Heights of divine Love have been evidenced so fully in *Christ*, without such a State were supposed, wherein a Saviour was needed? Or shall we say God could not fix on such
Ways

Ways and Methods without Wrong to Man, and Reflection on himself? Was it a Wrong to Man to be made mutable, to have such a Liberty of Will, or was it a Wrong to the Angels that fell? Was it a Wrong to Man to be punished for Sin; freely, voluntarily committed, tho' certainly foreknown? What if we cannot reconcile all the Difficulties our Fancies raise, can we deny this Fall to be with his Foresight, or deny the Ends accomplish'd by it?

If then the Ends accomplish'd by this Fall were so great, if the Manner of this Fall was such that the Blame must lie on the Creature, I cannot see but we may consider it in the Purposes of God as a Means to accomplish those Ends.

Nor can I see how such as will own an eternal Love to any, and build it all upon *Christ*, can possibly deny what we now plead for. For if God first determin'd to create Man an Object of Love, consider'd in himself and created State, and then determin'd to permit him to fall and become miserable, and then to love him again in *Christ*, when become an Object of Hatred: I say if it be thus, the primary Love of God to the Persons of any is not built on *Christ*, but they are

loved absolutely as Creatures, and only loved through *Christ* as Sinners : So that *Christ* comes in but in a secondary Way, as the Reason of the Love of God to any.

F I N I S.



E R R A T A.

-Page 14. line 6. from the bottom, after *greatest Pleasure*, add, *and Content*. p. 20. l. 3. from the bottom, for *most*, read *utmost*. p. 25. l. 8. after *Image*, add *as this*. p. 37. l. 9. from the bottom, for *Orders*, read *Order*. p. 46. l. 12. from the bottom, after *I*, read *here*. p. 50. l. 2. from the bottom, for *have*, read *make*. p. 51. l. 12. from the bottom, for *and*, read *as*. p. 53. l. 3. from the bottom, for *Companions*, read *Companions*. p. 54. l. 6. from the top, leave out *that*.

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